



JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

Scoping Comments: Wildlife Disturbance—Marine Mammals, Seabirds and Turtles

The MBNMS received approximately 7,000 comments from the public and specific comments from the MBNMS Advisory Council during the management plan review scoping process that directed the Sanctuary to actively pursue protection of the ecosystem and enhance biodiversity through management strategies. The Sanctuary also received a large number of comments pertaining to the Sanctuary's role in wildlife disturbance. A summary of these comments is presented below:

The following is a summary of all the JMPR Comments related to Wildlife Disturbance

- Snowy Plover education and presence is good. (MB)
- Concerned about peregrine falcon populations in Monterey Bay. (MB)
- Concerned about peregrines feeding on shorebirds, while fishermen are taking the blame. (MB)
- Sanctuary should address overpopulation of pinnipeds, which cause destruction of property, and financial loss to fishermen. (MB)
- Concerned about commercial feeding of marine mammals. (All)
- Concerned about the poor quality of some of the marine mammal studies. On the water studies can be very limited. (All)
- Concerned about overpopulations of pinnipeds. Sanctuary should investigate the feasibility of controlling these populations. (All)
- Concerned about white shark disturbances in GFNMS, due to people approaching them too closely, and using inappropriate means to attract them. (GF)
- Concerned about the vagueness of the GFNMS regulations regarding white sharks. (GF)
- Concerned because of lack of shells on the beach after storms. There are far fewer than there used to be, which might indicate that these invertebrate species are dying out. Sanctuary should investigate the cause for the decline. (MB)
- Concerned about seabirds being harmed by recreational fishing on Santa Cruz Wharf. (MB)
- Would like to get anadromous fish back up the streams. (MB)
- Concerned that harbor seals in the rivers are eating the salmon. (MB)
- Concerned about the influx of people who utilize tide pools as a food source at Pfeiffer Beach, Kirk Creek, and Pebble Beach. (MB)
- Concerned with non-native salmonid smolt stocking (Feather R. system) on ecosystem. Research is needed on effects. (MB)
- Concerned about the growing number of diseased and unhealthy marine mammals off the West Coast and especially in GFNMS. (All)
- For the past 10 years, the Monterey Bay Aquarium has used the Pacific Grove Marine Gardens Fish Refuge to gather kelp, invertebrates, and fin fish. (MB)
- There have been recent reports of canine distemper among harbor seals in Monterey Bay. (MB)
- Must have more regulations/guidelines for public shark viewing, similar to those for whale watching. (All)
- More interpretive signage at kayak launch sites and dive entry points in regard to marine mammals viewing etiquette (especially otters). (MB)



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- There should be a “season” on sea lions, like there is a season for salmon, to bring the ecosystem back into balance again. (MB)
- Sanctuary should increase conservation and protection for sea otters. (MB)
- Sanctuary should increase protection for all wildlife. (All)
- Investigate the impacts that pinniped populations are having on fishery resources. (MB)
- Sanctuary should investigate and address the effects of feral animals acting as disease vectors, and their connection to sea otter mortalities. (MB)
- Heavy metal concentrations in fish should be addressed by guidelines set on discharges from any source of the metals. (All)
- Extend MBNMS and CBNMS regulations regarding white sharks to cover GFNMS, or implement a new rule for limited entry for charter boats. (GF)
- Sanctuaries should potentially implement minimum approach distances and approach speed limitations for white sharks. (All)
- All sanctuaries should prohibit the attraction and harassment of white sharks. (All)
- More education of the public and recreational boat operators regarding etiquette for shark viewing and interaction. (All)
- Shark chumming should be banned in GFNMS. All shark-related activities should be permitted through the manager. (GF)
- Sanctuary should help implement management practices that allow the expediting of the required permit processes utilized by STEP. (MB)
- Need to investigate impacts to marine life and seabirds, from dogs that are not kept on a leash. (MB)
- GFNMS is the older sanctuary but has a better regime for birds. (All)
- Sanctuaries should adopt a set of standards for all wildlife viewing. This should include a “controlled speed perimeter” for recreational boaters and wildlife watchers. (All)
- Sanctuaries should consider adopting a limited entry policy and code of conduct for commercial wildlife watching vessels. (All)
- Sanctuaries should strive to reach a balance between research and wildlife viewing. (All)
- Shark attraction should be banned completely in GFNMS (including research). (GF)
- Sanctuary should support City of Santa Cruz in closing wharf to fishing to protect the Brown Pelicans from being entangled in fishing hooks/lines during times when sardines are there. (MB)
- Concerned with the current status of abalone in California, including habitat loss, over harvesting, and illegal poaching. Sanctuaries should support the California Department of Fish and Game’s Abalone Recovery and Management Plan. (All)
- Sanctuaries should do whatever is necessary to restore original population of birds (such as the Ashy Storm Petrel, Rhinoceros Auklet and Double Crested Cormorants), on Farallones Islands. Sanctuaries should reinstall structure of cables, or another effective setup to decrease gull predation. (All)
- Too many overlapping jurisdiction regarding over flight regulation. This issue needs to be resolved. (MB)
- Over flight restriction should be more specific, “blanket prohibition” of over flights below 1000 feet should be changed. (MB)
- Sanctuary should assess the constitutionality of its over-flight regulations and fines. (MB)
- Concerned with Sanctuary denial of over flight permits. (MB)
- Over flight regulation should be based on realistic potential for disturbance of marine life. Current regulations often restrict flights that would have no impact on marine mammals or seabirds. (MB)
- The FAA over flight restrictions of 500 feet are adequate, MBNMS regulations are excessive. (MB)
- Is noise is an issue then boat traffic should be addressed instead of aviation. Sound from boat engines travels considerable distances underwater, while most general aviation airplanes are not major noise generators. (MB)
- Aircraft restrictions being proposed are a violation of the federal commerce clause and only able to be imposed by the FAA and Congress. (MB)
- Over flight restrictions should be expanded to cover entire Sanctuary. Limits should be raised to 2000 or 3000 feet. (MB)
- Sanctuary should conduct more education and outreach to pilots about flight regulations. (MB)
- Sanctuary should not regulate aviation activities. The FAA regulations are sufficient. (MB)



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- The Sanctuary should work with the FAA on developing over flight regulations. (MB)
- Sanctuary should collaborate with the FAA to get the regulations placed in the FAR. (MB)
- Over flight regulations need to be changed, they should be based on realistic probabilities of marine mammal and seabird disturbances, not an arbitrary altitude limit. (MB)
- Aerial flights don't seem to disturb marine mammals; over flight regulations should be reevaluated. (MB)
- The Sanctuary should work with the FAA on developing over flight regulations. FAA should make the final call. The FAA is qualified to deal with this issue while the Sanctuary is not. (MB)
- Navy jets, Marine helicopters, and very low flying private aircraft should be restricted from flying along the coast. (MB)
- Removal from documentation of prohibitions and fines with respect to over flight will show good faith. (MB)
- If penalties are to be imposed for violation of over flight regulations, then regulators should explain how they are going to determine altitude of violator. (MB)
- All non-emergency military flight operations over the Sanctuary, and within behavior altering distances of Sanctuary resources should be banned. All other military flight operations should require a permit. (MB)
- Don't take away fireworks on July 4th. (MB)
- Sanctuary should refer to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), and develop and implement an educational campaign regarding harassment/disturbance of marine mammals, especially on beaches/rookeries. Participate in education campaigns to influence fishers regarding compliance with MMPA.
- Concerned about the fate of the harbor seals in the GFNMS. (GF)
- GFNMS should become adopt reserves to increase natural seal populations and protect pupping beaches; and should continue to work to reduce stress on seal populations (from pollution habitat destruction, etc.). (GF)
- Concerned about fate of seabirds in GFNMS. (GF)
- Concerned about wildlife disturbances in Elkhorn Slough, from increasingly heavy kayak use. Sanctuary should coordinate a study of these disturbances. (MB).
- Sanctuary should adopt a policy of serious enforcement of the Endangered Species Act. (All)
- Send coastal communities a brochure informing them about the need for lagoon habitat, water flow and restrictions on breaching sandbars at river mouths for threatened and endangered anadromous fish. Brochure should also inform them on penalties involved with such activities. (MB/GF)
- Sanctuary should have in place science based policies to address the contentious issues of expansion of the range of the Southern Sea Otter (such as interaction with fishermen and their target species), to ensure unimpeded recovery of this species. (MB/GF)
- Would like to see kayak companies (outfitters) required to obtain permits to operate within GFNMS so they understand the impacts to the ecosystem. (GF)
- Limited viewing entry to boats that target White Shark feeding events
- Protect the Gulf of the Farallones Sanctuary tide pools and estuaries from overuse by limiting visitor numbers. (GF)
- Better coordination between sanctuaries and Coast Guard /Navy/Commercial planes during breeding season on Farallon Islands. (GF)
- Blinds for non-invasive wildlife viewing. (GF, MB)
- Create a buffer region of at least four nautical miles around the islands. (GF)